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# MR. HILLHOUSE'S SPEECH

ON THE

## RESOLUTION TO REPEAL THE EMBARGO,

*NOVEMBER* 29, 1808.

*MR. PRESIDENT*,

WHEN I offered the resolution for a removal of the embargo, and submitted my remarks to the senate, I was impressed with serious apprehensions for our country's welfare, on account of the embarrassments so forcibly described, and which have been painted in such vivid colours by the gentleman from Virginia. [Mr. Giles.] It was because I felt anxious that we should extricate ourselves as soon as possible from those embarrassments, that I came forward thus early with my resolution. I had been led to believe, and still believe, that the way to extricate ourselves is, to explore the causes of our difficulties, to examine into the truth of facts, and to have a candid and impartial inquiry into the *policy* and *expediency* of our present measures; that if unfortunately we should be found in an *error*, we may retrace our steps, and not by an obstinate perseverance therein, involve our country in ruin. Little did I expect that I should be charged with having proposed a *tame submission* to foreign aggression, or a disposition to *abandon* our neutral rights, or *surrender* the independence of my country; much less with having forgotten the *spirit and policy* of '76, which carried us safely through the revolution, and achieved our independence. I confined myself to general remarks, and was not perhaps so particular as I ought to have been, to make myself understood. I shall therefore now take the liberty of stating what were the *spirit and policy of* '76; and I shall be able to shew, from public documents and records, that as long as that *spirit and policy* were pursued, they secured us in the enjoyment of our independence, and

caused our maritime and other rights to be respected. Unfortunately for our country, it was a departure from that policy that has brought us into our present situation. It is not surprising that many mistakes should be made respecting the *spirit and policy of* '76, by those who must have derived their information from tradition, and not from their own personal observation. I have noticed that many of those who say the most on that subject, were either not born, or were in their cradles, or have since migrated to the United States, to enjoy the fruits and blessings of that revolution.

The patriots and statesmen who guided our public councils at the commencement of the revolution, believing our rights were invaded, and our liberties endangered by the arbitrary and unwarrantable claims of the British parliament, resorted first to respectful petitions and remonstrances, to induce the British government to abandon their unjust claims, and adopt such measures as would secure our rights and liberties. But when these means were found to be ineffectual, they nobly dared to make their appeal to *arms*, and to declare themselves a free and independent nation: and though we were without a regular organized government, and had neither army nor navy, they dared, in defence of their just rights, to wage war with a powerful nation. *They* did not tell us that we must abandon our right to navigate the ocean, or yield up any other right because of *surrounding dangers*. The maxims then were, that *rights*, which were not worth defending, were *n' ights:* that to be *respected*, we must convince others that we would not *tamely submit* to *insult*; and that to preserve *peace* we must be prepared for *war*. This *spirit* and *policy* carried us safely through the revolutionary war, established our independence, and secured our national sovereignty; one essential attribute of which is, the right to navigate the ocean. In 1783 we obtained an honourable peace. In 1793, war having commenced between France and England, our maritime rights were invaded by the latter, and our vessels were captured and condemned under the memorable November orders. An attempt was then made to introduce the same policy to defend our rights and vindicate our honour, which is now, and for some time has been, in the flood tide of experiment. The famous resolutions proposing duties of *discrimination* between foreign nations, the entering into a *commercial warfare* with England, and propositions for a *non-intercourse law*, and *sequestration* of British debts, will be remembered. The journals of that session of congress contain a record of them, and will shew who were the *friends* and *advocates* of that policy.

Fortunately for the nation, we then had a chief magistrate who was actuated by the *spirit*, and well knew, and was determined to pursue the *policy* of '76. He boldly came forward, and put an end to all those projects, by nominating an envoy extraordinary to the court of Great Britain, to remonstrate against the wrongs, and demand satisfaction for the injuries we had sustained. That minister

was not sent out with a *non-importation* or a *non-intercourse* act in his hand; which the president well knew would have been understood and considered by Great Britain in the nature of a *threat*, or an attempt to *coerce*; and would defeat the object of the mission. He was in *reality* sent with the olive branch on the principle of a *fair* and *honourable* negotiation.

In the mean time, knowing that a failure of the negotiation must result in war, or an abandonment of our rights, every preparation to meet the event, which it was in the power of the country to make, was made. Laws were passed for fortifying our ports and harbors; to provide a navy; to erect arsenals and provide magazines; for raising artillerists and engineers; for directing a detachment from the militia; to prohibit the exportation of arms and ammunition, and to encourage the importation of the same; to build or purchase vessels to be armed and equipped as gallies or otherwise; and for making further and more effectual provision for the protection of the frontiers of the United States. These several acts were passed in the short space of about ten weeks; and not only found their way into the statute book, but were promptly carried into execution: and being laws of a mere municipal nature, providing for our internal security and defence, they gave no umbrage to Great Britain. Yet they spoke a language she well understood. What was the consequence? Great Britain admitted our claim, revoked her orders, and made satisfaction for the injury; and a treaty was concluded, under which our citizens have received millions of dollars for the losses they sustained by the capture and condemnation of their vessels; and since it went into operation, as the gentleman from Virginia candidly admits, the United States have enjoyed unexampled prosperity.

France, still at war with England, had expected that the differences between England and the United States, would involve the two countries in war. Dissatisfied, therefore, with the treaty, France manifested an unfriendly disposition towards our government. In 1797, the spoliations committed under the outrageous decrees of France, were such as could no longer be tolerated consistently with our national honour and interest: and the French government had moreover refused to receive our minister.

It was once more fortunate for the nation, that our then chief magistrate, and the councils of our country, were still under the influence and guidance of the *spirit* and *policy* of '76. Envoys extraordinary were sent to remonstrate against the injuries we were suffering, and to demand satisfaction: not accompanied by *non-importation* laws, or any other acts or resolutions which could wound the pride of that nation: at the same time congress provided means of defence; so that the nation might be prepared to avenge its wrongs, and vindicate its honor, in case of refusal, on the part of France, to do us justice. Laws were passed, prohibiting the exportation of arms and ammunition, and for encouraging the importation there-

of; to provide for the defence of the ports and harbours of the United States; to authorize a detachment from the militia, and to provide a naval armament.

France did refuse to treat, and rejected our ministers. What was the result? *not long, detailed diplomatic correspondences*, further *remonstrances*, and *paper resolutions:* a negotiation of a different nature commenced; we spoke a language not to be misunderstood: we spoke from the mouth of the cannon. Our treaties with her were annulled; all intercourse prohibited; our merchant vessels authorized to arm, and defend themselves againt French privateers; an army was raised; and our little navy equipped, manned, and sent out to protect our commerce, and capture the armed vessels of France. A war, not of *offence*, but *defence*, was commenced. Naval conflicts soon ensued, and a French frigate was taken, after a hard fought battle, by an American frigate commanded by the gallant Truxton. The French privateers and piratical boats, which had annoyed our trade, were swept from the ocean; our commerce resumed its wonted activity, and our vessels again navigated in safety every sea. What was the conduct of France? a declaration of war? far from it. Though she had before treated us with indignity, the manly attitude we assumed, in defence of our rights and national honor, commanded her respect; and she proposed and entered into a negotiation, which ended in a treaty, that was ratified by both governments, and was finally promulgated by a proclamation of the president of the United States, on the 21st of December, 1801. At this period the American flag was *respected* in every sea, and the American name and character were *honored* by all nations.

Since that period, unfortunately for our country, a different policy has prevailed in its public councils, founded no doubt on the idea "that a just nation is trusted on its word; while wars are only necessary to nations of an opposite character." A policy calculated on to save the necessity of ships of war, and exactly comporting with some of the *modern* ideas of *economy*. In pursuance of this policy, our navy has been suffered to decline; and some of our ships have, for years, been moored to rot in the mud of the Eastern Branch of the Potomac.

Many efforts have been made, but in vain, for removing our little fleet into the *salt water*, to protect our commerce, at least on our coast; and to secure us from being insulted, within our own jurisdiction, by the armed vessels of the belligerents. We were told that if our ships went out, and should meet with foreign vessels depredating on our commerce, or insulting our government, they would *fight*, and we should have *war*. That our ships would fight, on proper occasions, I have no doubt.

Though the discouragements which have been thrown in the way of our naval prosperity have greatly tended to depress the martial spirit, it still exists, and if an opportunity presents will be drawn forth into action. Believing this, I confidently rely on our being

ultimately able to extricate ourselves from the perplexing and distressing situation described by the gentleman from Virginia. That this opinion is correct, the conduct of our naval force in the Mediterranean sea, furnishes ample proof. The war with Tripoli has afforded the only active and *honorable* employment which our navy has had since the treaty with France; and in which the gallant deeds of our little band of heroes, deeds worthy of the American name and character, have commanded the admiration and applause of surrounding nations; and the recollection thereof will be cherished by the American people, when yonder marble monument, erected in honor of those heroes who fell before Tripoli, shall be mouldered into dust.

The question recurs, what is the cause of our present embarrassments? what has brought us into our present sad dilemma? for a sad one it is, if it be true, that we are reduced to the alternative of a war with both belligerents, or the continuance of the present embargo system. Surely they could not have originated in party newspaper publications, or the electioneering squabbles of the *ins* and the *outs*. The effects of these are greatly over-rated. Though they produce much excitement and noise here, they make but a small impression on the other side of the water. The public documents on our table, those furnished last session of congress, and information in possession of the senate, shew that our difficulties arise from our having forsaken the *spirit*, and departed from the *policy* of '76; and, in lieu thereof, adopted that *retiring policy* which recommends the *abandonment* of our right to navigate the ocean, because our commerce is exposed to *danger* from the illegal attacks and depredations of the belligerent powers. The *spirit* of '76 induced us to *face danger*, to secure that right: and would not the *same spirit* prompt us to hazard something in its defence?

It is a painful task to me to undertake to point out the impolicy and impropriety of our present system of measures; but I see no other way of avoiding those evils which the gentleman from Virginia has so forcibly described (to remove which I would most cordially co-operate) or to effect that union in our public councils, which he so ardently desires, and which I most devoutly wish for, than by going into the inquiry, to discover where the error lies.

I shall go no further back than to 1806, the date of the memorials of the merchants of New Haven, and the great cities and towns on the sea coast, now introduced by the gentleman from Kentucky. [Mr. Pope.] They complained of aggressions on their commerce by Great Britain, and prayed that the protecting arm of government might be extended for their relief. The Boston memorial suggested a special mission. They expected, no doubt, that the envoy would be sent, as heretofore, to attempt a friendly negotiation of differences; not to hold out a *non-importation* act for an *olive branch*, or to be bound by instructions to demand, as an *ultimatum*, that the American flag should protect all persons on board our merchant vessels;

which the British government contended could not be granted, because they said it would tend to unman their navy, and cripple that important means of defence against a powerful and enraged foe: and as they disclaimed all right of impressing American seamen, they supposed that our claim, in its utmost extent, might be considered a measure calculated to withdraw from their service their *own* seamen, rather than to protect *real* American seamen. This had been the subject of negotiation, as well under the former, as the present administration, and the point had been pressed as far as could be of any avail. The like answer was given to both administrations: the principle cannot be admitted.

The gentleman from Virginia has read a resolution, declaring there had been a violation of our neutral rights, and an encroachment upon onr national independence, by the capture and condemnation of our vessels under the orders of the British government; which resolution passed in February, 1806, by the unanimous vote of the senate: a vote that does honor to that body, as it exhibits to the nation, and to the world, that whatever may be the collision of party on subjects of minor importance, whenever it is a question in regard to the defence of our *own rights*, and the *interest* of a *foreign power*, we are an *undivided people*. Yet notwithstanding this unanimous expression of the opinion of the senate, and the appointment of an envoy, which took place at this time, no measures of defence were adopted. A *non-importation act* was passed and relied upon for maintaining our claims; this was declared in public debate; and being made known could not be concealed. It was wafted to England before our envoy could reach her shores. So far from being able to use that act for the purpose of enforcing our claims; to prevent its being an insuperable bar to negotiation, our ministers inform the secretary of state, in their letter of September 11, 1806, that in speaking to the British minister of that act, they mentioned it in these terms: "after a short vindication of the act, in the course of which we did not omit to represent it in connection with the special mission which grew out of it, as manifesting the *friendly* sentiments and views of our government towards that of his majesty."

Although the mission failed of success, have we not reason to believe, from the documents laid before congress, that if the instructions had been as *liberal*, and the negotiation had been conducted in the *spirit and policy* of '76, as was that of 1794, which doubtless was expected by those merchants, it would have had a like favorable termination? an *intimation* having been previously given, by the British minister, of a *disposition*, which, in diplomatic proceedings, is nearly tantamount to a *direct offer*, to renew the former treaty (under which we had enjoyed ten years peace, and, to use the expression of the gentleman from Virginia, *unexampled prosperity*) to remain in force two years after the termination of the present war. The overture was not accepted; from an appre-

hension, perhaps, that our *dexterity* in managing a negotiation, aided by such measures as the *present policy* might dictate, would enable us to obtain *better* terms. That the non-importation act did not *aid*, but tended to *obstruct*, a friendly adjustment, is manifest from the following note of lord Holland and lord Auckland, addressed to our ministers.

"*DOWNING STREET*,

"*September* 4, 1806.

"GENTLEMEN,

"We have received a copy (sent by you at our request) of the act of congress to prohibit, from and after the 15th of November, the import into the territories of the United States, of a very large description of goods, wares and merchandise, from any port or place situated in Great Britain or Ireland.

"On a full consideration of that act, we think it our duty to express our earnest hope and expectation, that some means may be found to suspend the execution of a measure so opposite, in its temper and tendency, to the disposition and views with which our pending negotiation has been commenced and is carrying on.

"The measure, unless suspended, will take effect, if not before our discussions can be closed, at least before it is possible that their result can be known in the United States; and would obviously lead to the necessity of proposing to parliament similar steps on the part of this country, by which mutual irritation would be excited, and fresh impediments created in the way of such a final adjustment, as, we trust, is mutually desired.

"We rely on you for taking such immediate steps, in this business, as may best contribute to a happy termination of our treaty, and to a cordial and permanent friendship between his majesty's subjects and the citizens of the United States.

"We have the honor to be

Your faithful humble servants,

"VASSAL HOLLAND,

"AUCKLAND."

Our ministers did recommend a suspension of the act and it was accordingly suspended.

The effects usually produced by a policy which attempts to coerce by threats addressed to an independend power, were exemplified in the correspondence of our minister at the court of Madrid, appointed *soon* after the commencement of the present administration. After protracted diplomatic discussions, in which our minister laboured to convince the Spanish government of the justice of our claim, and the propriety of their acceding to it, and this appeal to their *reason* had proved ineffectual, a last attempt was made

in a pompous gasconading note, in which (as well as I remember from having heard the correspondence once read) our minister informed the government of Spain, that the United States were a great, powerful, and high spirited nation, who would not submit to injury or insult, and concluded by telling the Spanish minister that there were only two modes of settling controversies between nations, *arbitration* or *war*. The Spanish minister returned for answer, that the king his master had commanded him to inform the American minister, he should not choose *arbitration*.

Thus has the matter rested, and our claims are still unsatisfied. When it was discovered that the United States had abandoned the *spirit and policy* of '76, and placed their dependence on *acts* of *congress*, *paper resolutions*, and *diplomatic remonstrances* as their *system of defence*; what was the consequence? repeated violations of our neutral rights, and the capture and condemnation of our vessels. Long and elaborate reasonings have been gone into, to establish our rights, and induce a change in the conduct of those powers, and to *cause* them to respect our rights: all to no purpose. Evils have been accumulating upon us to that degree, that we are now told, that, to *save* our independence and honor, and *secure* our rights, we must agree to a *continued* embargo, "a *permanent* suspension of commerce:" that is, to *preserve* our rights, we must *abandon* them altogether. Logic this, which I do not understand. If there be *wisdom* or *policy* in the measure, it is beyond my comprehension. Had *this* been the *spirit and policy* of '76, should we ever have achieved our independence? should we now occupy these seats, under the constitution of the United States? our rights are attacked on the ocean: we are called upon to *abandon* them. If our shores should be invaded, would not this *retiring policy* invite us to flee to the mountains?

On my mind there rests not the smallest doubt, that if our public councils had been undeviatingly guided by the *spirit and policy* of '76, we should neither have had war, nor been under the necessity, in obedience to our own laws, of *abandoning* the ocean, and *submitting* to the loss of a commerce second only in importance to that of any nation on the face of the globe: whereby we are called upon to make a *sacrifice* of property greater than the *whole expense* of all the armaments and other defensive measures, adopted under both the former administrations, for the protection of our commerce, and the vindication of our national honor. In point of *real economy*, then, we are losers to a *vast amount*: and to what extent these privations and sufferings are to be carried, and how long to be continued, cannot be foreseen.

Gentlemen, who oppose the repeal of the embargo, tell us that Great Britain has obtained the complete dominion of the sea; that she is proud, haughty, avaricious; and that her object is to obtain the commerce and carrying trade of the world. After having secured the quiet possession thereof, will she *peaceably* suffer us to

become her rivals? Will she not tell us, you voluntarily abandoned, and shall not again resume them? and would it not be attended with more danger, expense, and difficulty to regain them, than to hold fast the possession?

In vain should we address her from that *retirement* recommended by the gentleman from Virginia, as *dignified*; a retirement in which would be dissipated the resources and wealth of the nation. In vain, I say, should we address her with *arguments* the most forcible to prove our right to navigate the ocean. In vain should we ask her consent, though we were to employ the persuasive eloquence of that gentleman, to permit us to resume our extended and profitable commerce. We should come forth from our *dignified retirement* under great disadvantages to commence a new conflict for our right to navigate the ocean. The enemy with whom we shall have to contend may have made peace with her rival, and we be left alone to maintain the conflict.

Or perhaps we may have to contend with an enemy all powerful on the land, and who may become formidable on the sea; with a power that has for a long time cast a wishful eye towards the fair fields of America, and has almost kept up continual claim to a large portion of the United States, which was once within her embrace, and which was wrested from her by the war of 1756. Then may we expect to see adopted the ancient Roman policy—the *turning out* of the old proprietors of the soil to *make way* for military adventurers. Then might we expect the feudal system in all its ancient rigor.

The gentleman from Virginia has told us that his brother farmers must raise less produce, and turn their surplus labor to improve and beautify their farms. Is there not some *danger* that even this may serve as a lure to tempt the cupidity of some foreign nation; and if the same *timid, retiring policy* should prevail, will they not be emboldened to attempt to possess themselves of those very farms and improvements? Nor should we be secure, were we to assume the savage garb and manner of life. Mr. President, if a conflict should be necessary to maintain our right to navigate the ocean, I wish it may happen while some of the revolutionary patriots of '76 are still living, who can *reanimate* their countrymen with *their spirit*. Some of the present generation may acquire that spirit by inheritance; but none, I fear, by education.

It has been insinuated more than once, that the opposition to the present system of measures (and to that system no one has been more opposed than myself) proceeds from *party feelings* and *disappointed ambition*. That this is unfounded, will appear by a resort to the journals of congress, our statute book, and to well known public transactions. At the commencement of the struggle for our liberties and independence, from a full conviction of the rectitude of the cause, I engaged on the side of our country, with the ardor natural to a youthful mind. And those who know me best will

not accuse me of having declined, through the whole revolutionary war, any *exposure* or *sacrifice* which the call of my country required. In 1794 I voted for all those efficient measures of defence then adopted, and opposed the *paper resolution policy* then brought forward, the same substantially which for some years has been pursued, and is now urged upon us. In 1797--8 I voted for the naval and military preparations then made. Under the present administration, I have uniformly voted for all *such* measures of defence as appeared to me to have *efficacy*, or to comport with the *spirit* and *policy* of '76; though the gentleman from Virginia would seem to imagine I was *smarting* under the *unpopularity* of my former votes for armies and navies; measures which are supposed to have gone far in effecting a change in the administration. I am happy, however, in the reflection, that if those votes *lost me* my *popularity* and *political power*, they contributed to *save* my *country's rights and honor*. I shall also be found uniformly to have opposed a *timid*, *humiliating* policy, which must ever end in war, or an *abandonment* of our nation's rights and honor. A senator of the United States is unworthy of that high and responsible station, and to be entrusted with the destinies of his country, if, upon questions of great national importance, involving our rights, honor and independence, his vote could be governed by his *attachment* or *dislike* to a chief magistrate, or others in power.

The gentleman from Kentucky, in referring to me, has used the expression "the gentleman in opposition," meaning, I suppose, to have it understood, that I am an *opposer* of the present administration. I do not admit that I am, or ever have been the *opposer* or the *favorite* of any administration. I avow myself to be the *opposer* only of such measures as in my judgement will not promote the public good. [Mr. Pope rose to explain, and said he meant only to refer to the opposition of Mr. Hillhouse to the embargo.] Mr. H. declared himself satisfied.

The gentleman from Kentucky has also announced (he does not say officially) that the presidential electioneering races for the present season are over; and calls upon the several riders to dismount their *hobbies*; not reflecting that I am not one of the *jockey club*; nor had a *card* of invitation to the race ground, without which none were admitted. Neither I, nor any member from Connecticut, was invited to attend the *famous caucus* which was convened for the purpose of *manufacturing* the great officers of state. We were not emulous of that honor, being content with the mode pointed out by the constitution of the United States, for choosing president and vice-president.

To preserve our independence, and avoid *tame submission*, we are gravely told by the gentleman from Virginia, and also in a report pronounced by the gentleman from Maryland, [Mr. Smith] to be the most *luminous* production ever submitted to congress, (the result probably of the combined wisdom of the whole administration) that

"there is no other alternative but war with both nations, or a continuance of the present system." The idea of going to war, at the same time, with the two great belligerent powers, is as novel and surprising to me, as the idea of a *permanent embargo* for a *measure of defence*. Suppose the warfare be on the land; in what manner, let me ask, would three belligerents, each hostile to the other, array their forces for action, and conduct the battle? would it be in the form of a triangle, each firing alternately, first on one enemy and then on the other? or suppose the fleets of two of the belligerents, say French and American, meet on the ocean; and after a bloody conflict, for I have no doubt both nations would fight bravely, the American fleet, for I would always incline to our own side, cripples and captures that of their enemy; a British fleet then comes up and takes both, though inferior perhaps, before the action, to either? the idea is too ridiculous to merit serious attention.

When two nations have a common enemy, they are inclined to cultivate a friendly disposition towards each other. If we were to declare war against England, France, no doubt, would revoke her decrees, give us a friendly reception into her ports, and afford us all the aid and protection in her power, both by sea and land. England would do the like, if we were to declare war against France. Such *unquestionably* would be the fact; and it is in vain to shut our eyes against the truth. There was a strong proof of this exhibited in the conduct of England and France in 1794, and 1798.

Is it not *national antipathies*, more than *foreign predilections*, that produce crimination and recrimination of an English party and a French party, of English and French influence? for the honor of my country I hope it is; for I should be sorry to think so meanly of the American people as to believe they would prefer the *interest* of any *foreign nation* to that of their *own*. Should we unfortunately be brought to make the experiment, by being engaged in a *just* and *necessary* war (and none other I hope will ever be made by the United States) I am confident we shall find a *union* of sentiment and action. These are, however, unnecessary speculations; for I see no necessity of declaring war against any nation.

To permit our merchant vessels to arm, under proper restrictions, and to equip, man, and send out our public ships, to defend those maritime rights which are clear and indisputable, is not war, nor will it necessarily involve us in war. Every nation on earth would respect us for defending our essential rights. I do not agree with the gentleman from Kentucky, that the commanders of merchant vessels can commit the peace of the nation, if the government do not countenance and uphold them in their wrong, but promptly disavow the act. Vessels bound up the Mediterranean sea, and to the East Indies, have always been allowed to arm; and I have never heard that they have, in a single instance, committed the peace of the nation.

In answer to the inquiry, what good has the embargo done? the gentleman from Virginia says, that it has saved to our citizens one hundred and fifty millions of property, which would have been captured and carried into France or England; and to our country fifty thousand seamen, who, instead of being in captivity in a foreign land, are placed in the bosom of their families. This, if true, is an important consideration; but I doubt the fact. Not that I question the veracity of the gentleman: were he to declare a fact as of his own knowledge, I should have a most perfect reliance on it. But in this case the gentleman's declaration being but an expression of *opinion*, not supported by any one fact within his knowledge, he must excuse me if I cannot yield my assent to it; more especially as circumstances, some of which are within my own knowledge, lead me to a different opinion. It is a fact, that most of our vessels which escaped the embargo, or have since gone out under permits from the president of the United States, have returned in safety, and made good voyages, from which the seamen "have returned to the bosom of their families," and with something to administer to their wants and comfort; not, as in the other case, empty-handed from our dismantled ships, to share the distresses of their little households, and to hear their children cry for bread. Many of our vessels which were out when the embargo was laid, have remained out, avoiding the inhospitable shores of their own country, as they would a land infected with pestilence. Those vessels have been navigating the ocean under the American flag, with as much *safety* as before the embargo was laid, and have constantly been employed in the carrying trade to *vast profit*.

Having, at the commencement of this debate, submitted my observations on the supposed possibility of starving England or destroying her manufactures; and the gentleman from Massachusetts, [Mr. Lloyd] better informed on the subject of commerce than myself, having exhibited the facts to the senate in a manner that must carry conviction, I shall not trespass on the patience of the senate with any further remarks on that point.

Nor shall I add to what I have already said, to prove that one object of the embargo was to *put down commerce*, for the purpose of *raising up manufactures*, than to adduce the authority on which my opinion rests; which was not, as has been insinuated by the gentleman from Maryland, common place observations, and party newspaper publications, but the declarations of the president of the United States, not in an ordinary correspondence, but in an answer to an address from the legislature of New Hampshire, a New England state, participating in common with the other New England states in the benefits of commerce. Speaking of the embargo, he says, "It gave us time to make a last appeal to the *reason* and *reputation* of nations. In the mean while I see with satisfaction that this measure of self-denial is approved and supported by the great body of our *real citizens*; that they meet with cheerfulness the

temporary privations it occasions ; and are preparing with spirit to provide for themselves those comforts and conveniences of life, for which it would be *unwise ever more* to resort to distant countries." In another answer to an address, this sentiment is expressed, that the agriculturalist and manufacturer shall be planted down side by side, so as to receive, at our own doors, those comforts and conveniences of life, which we have been accustomed to seek on the ocean. No such effects could be produced by the embargo, nor can it answer any such purpose, unless made *perpetual*, or continued *for a great length of time*.

The gentleman from Virginia has thought proper to go into a consideration of the commercial advantages which he imagines are enjoyed by the people inhabiting the northern in comparison with the southern states, under the constitution and laws of the United States, and has indulged himself in remarks respecting a disposition in the people of New England to *insurrection*, *rebellion* and *disunion*; but these are topics on which I shall say nothing, as I do not think it expedient to discuss them at this time.

The *intimations* of the gentleman from Kentucky and the gentleman from Georgia, [Mr Crawford,] about *amputation* and *military coercion*, I shall also pass by without further notice, than to assure those gentlemen, that in New England they will produce no *intimidation*, if they should excite any attention.

It was particularly unfortunate for the gentleman from Virginia, that he should feel himself under the necessity of making remarks that may be construed into a denunciation of a certain description of our fellow citizens as DEMAGOGUES, and as having attempted to excite *sedition* and *rebellion*, because they doubt the expediency of the embargo, and question the policy of some of the measures of the present administration. That gentleman, I imagine, will hardly consent that to doubt the policy and oppose the measures of an administration, shall be the criterion for deciding who are the DEMAGOGUES of our country ; for surely, if that is to be the rule of decision, the conduct of that gentleman during the *first* administration under the constitution of the United States, and the ability and perseverance with which he maintained his opposition to it, would give him a *pre-eminent* claim *to rank high* on the list of DEMAGOGUES. I extremely regret those remarks on another account. I know *many* of the most venerable characters of our country, men who were patriots of '76, men who made great sacrifices, and risqued their lives in our struggle for liberty and independence, men who have acquired a well earned fame, which has never been tarnished, who doubt the policy of the embargo, and decidedly disapprove the measure, as being altogether *inefficient* as it regards foreign powers, and *ruinous* to ourselves.

The gentleman from Virginia is peculiarly unfortunate also, in ascribing the failure of the embargo, to produce the desired effect on foreign nations, to party misrepresentations, and newspaper electioneering publications, describing the embargo as an unpopu-

lar measure calculated to excite general discontent, and bring about a change of rulers, which, he says, reached England between the 22d of June and the 29th of July, and produced a sudden change in the conduct of the British minister, and in his disposition to a friendly accommodation. I could hardly have expected, even in the heat of debate, such a declaration from a gentleman so well acquainted with the British character and government. The ministry there know full well how to appreciate party publications, and the representations of the *ins* and the *outs*.

Those party misrepresentations, as the gentleman is pleased to call them, and those newspaper electioneering publications, would have had but little effect in England, and still less weight with the ministry, if they had not had an official stamp of truth put upon them, by the proclamation of the president of the United States. With the indulgence of the senate, I will read the proclamation.

"*By the president of the United States, a proclamation.*

"Whereas information has been received, that sundry persons are combined, or combining and confederating together, on Lake Champlain and the country thereto adjacent, for the purpose of forming insurrections against the authority of the laws of the United States, for opposing the same, and obstructing their execution; and that such combinations are too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the powers vested in the marshals by the laws of the United States:

"Now, therefore, to the end that the authority of the laws may be maintained, and that those concerned, directly or indirectly, in any insurrection or combination against the same, may be duly warned, I have issued this my PROCLAMATION, hereby commanding such insurgents, and all concerned in such combinations, instantly and without delay to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes: and I do hereby further require and command all officers, having authority, civil or military, and all other persons, civil or military, who shall be found within the vicinage of such insurrections or combinations, to be aiding and assisting, by all the means in their power, by force of arms or otherwise, to quell and subdue such insurrections or combinations, to seize upon all those therein concerned, who shall not, instantly and without delay, disperse and retire to their respective abodes; and to deliver them over to the civil authority of the place, to be proceeded against according to law.

"In testimony whereof, I have caused the seal of the United States to be affixed to these presents, and signed the same with my hand. Given at the city of Washington the 19th day of April, 1808, and in the sovereignty and independence of the United States the thirty-second.

"TH: JEFFERSON.

"By the president,

"JAMES MADISON, secretary of state."

The senate will recollect that the last session of congress was closed on the 25th of April ; and, although the proclamation was dated the 19th of that month, no intimation thereof, or of the state of the country to which it referred, was given to congress by the president of the United States. The proclamation was published in Vermont, April 30, and in the National Intelligencer, printed at the seat of government, on the 13th of May. Here was an official document, issuing from the same high authority that recommended the embargo, declaring to the nation, and to the world, that there existed so great uneasiness and discontent on account of the embargo, as to induce the forming of unlawful combinations to resist its execution, too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary process of law, and which required the employment of a military force. Superadd to this, that our small standing army, and the whole naval force in actual service, were put in requisition, to aid in its execution.

These circumstances present a melancholy view of our situation. An *embargo* recommended under the influence of the great popularity of the president, and *professed* to be laid for preserving in safety our vessels, our seamen and merchandise, and saving the honour, and vindicating the rights of our country, had become so unpopular, before the close of the session of the congress which imposed it, that in the president's opinion, it could not be executed by the ordinary process of law, and through the mild medium of courts of justice; so that it had already become necessary to call in the aid of an armed force.

I could have hoped it would not have been found necessary to employ the American navy to cruize against our own commerce ; and little did I expect that the army I had so recently voted to raise, for the purpose, as I supposed, of opposing foreign aggression, would be required to point their bayonets at the breasts of their fellow citizens.